



FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY

M E M O R A N D U M



TO: Chairman and Members
Park Authority Board

VIA: Michael A. Kane, Director

FROM: Charlie Bittenbring, Director
Park Services Division

DATE: March 1, 2006

Agenda

Joint Park Services/Resource Management Committee
Wednesday, March 8, 2006 – 3:30 p.m.
Board Room – Herrity Building
Chairman: Gilbert S. McCutcheon and Frank Vajda

1. Approval – Proposed 2006 Fee Adjustments to the Park Authority's Published Fee Schedule – Action*

*Enclosures

cc: Timothy K. White
Leadership Team

Board Agenda Item
March 22, 2006

ACTION -

Approval – Proposed 2006 Fee Adjustments to the Park Authority's Published Fee Schedule

ISSUE:

Approval of recommended fee adjustments to the published fee schedule for 2006.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Park Authority Director recommends that the Park Authority Board approve the proposed fee adjustments to the published fee schedule as advertised.

TIMING:

Board action is requested on March 22, 2006 in order to have the fee changes take effect April 1, 2006.

BACKGROUND:

Park Authority staff reviews fees annually to ensure that the agency remains on target to meet financial goals established by the Park Authority Board. As a result of the staff review done during the fall of 2005, a number of fees were proposed for modification or addition to the published fee schedule. The Board authorized public notification of the proposed fee adjustments and a date for a public comment meeting at the January 25, 2006 Board meeting.

Public notification of the fee proposal and public comment meeting included: distribution of press releases to news organizations, advertisement and distribution of the fee proposal at park sites and on the Park Authority's web site. Public comments were solicited in writing via letter, fax and e-mail between January 30, 2006 and February 28, 2006. A public comment meeting was held at the Herrity Building on February 15, 2006.

Comments received during the public comment period are included in Attachment 2. A comment summary is as follows.

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Six speakers attended the public comment meeting. Three spoke in opposition to applying the business activities license fee to their group, two generally opposed RECenter fee adjustments, and one advocated adopting a system of price discounts based on income need rather than age or other criteria. (Staff will address issues related to the business activity license fee in committee on March 8, 2006.)

Over the course of the 30-day comment period, written comments were received from 11 individuals. Topics included:

- 2-person RECenter passes – two commenters said these passes should be available to any two interested parties, not just two individuals from the same household.
- Golf – two people expressed an interest in free or reduced fee golf as a benefit for Fairfax County Public School bus drivers.
- Needs-based fee discounts – one wrote to advocate a transition from fee discounts based on age criteria to discounts based on income.
- RECenter fee increases – two opposed RECenter fee increases in general.
- RECenter funding – one comment suggested that RECenter operations should not be self-sustaining, but should be tax supported.
- Senior discounts – one comment suggested that senior fee discounts should be “optional” so that seniors with higher incomes would pay full prices.
- South Run Field House – one comment was received that opposed proposed adjustments to the field house rental fees at South Run.

There are no changes to the fee proposal recommended as a result of the public comment meeting. Adoption of the fee proposal in its entirety is recommended. Collectively, the proposed adjustments play an important role in the Fairfax County Park Authority's ability to meet the Revenue Fund (Fund 170) financial goals established by the Board.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Approval of the fee proposal recommendation is projected to generate approximately \$256,800 in additional revenue in FY 2006 and \$984,023 in FY 2007 for the Park Revenue Fund (Fund 170).

ENCLOSED DOCUMENTS:

Attachment 1: Proposed Fee Adjustments FY 2006

Attachment 2: Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for FY 2006

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STAFF:

Michael A. Kane, Director

Timothy K. White, Chief Operating Officer

Cindy Messinger, Director, Resource Management Division

Charles Bittenbring, Director, Park Services Division

Dan Sutherland, Manager, Grounds Management Branch, Park Operations Division

Cindy Walsh, Operations Manager, Resource Management Division

Peter Furey, Manager, Golf Enterprises/Lakefront Parks, Park Services Division

Steve Lewis, Manager, Business Office, Park Services Division

Barbara Nugent, Manager, Leisure and Wellness Branch, Park Services Division

Nick Duray, Manager, Marketing Research and Planning, Park Services Division

Proposed Fee Adjustments

FY 2006



Fairfax County Park Authority

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Organization of the FY 2006 Fee Proposal

Organization of the FY 2006 Fee Proposal follows the format first introduced in 2004. A section entitled 'Current Situation – System-wide Considerations' describes the important factors in the Park Authority's overall operational environment that had an effect on the composition of this year's fee adjustment proposal. This overview is followed by separate sections for each of the various business areas for which fee adjustments are being proposed. Each of these sections first outlines important situational factors specific to that business area that had an effect on the development of the fee adjustment proposal. This is then followed by a summary of the fee adjustments proposed for that business area in FY 2006.

Current Situation – System-wide Considerations

- Guidelines and projections from the Comprehensive Fund Management Plan typically form an important framework for proposed fee adjustments. Important considerations from this plan are as follows:
 1. Sufficient revenue must be produced annually to meet long-term debt service obligations for park facility revenue bonds, which are repaid with revenues from user fees. The current obligation includes annual debt service payments of slightly more than \$ 1 million annually plus a requirement that the Revenue Fund maintain a level of net revenue before debt service sufficient to meet 125% of annual debt service payments.
 2. The Park Revenue Fund will likely be challenged to meet the Board's desired \$825,000 set aside target for the Park Capital Improvement Fund due to the impact of the Cub Run and Laurel Hill start-ups prior to revenues reaching stabilized levels at those two facilities.
 3. Revenue growth needed to sustain the Park Revenue Fund is assumed to come from multiple sources, including new facility introductions, program growth and fee increases. And as a matter of principle, comparatively small and regular fee increases are preferred over less frequent, but larger increases.
- Inflation spiked in 2005 after a number of years of low annual growth. Growth in the Washington-Baltimore consumer price index for 2005 is currently projected at 4.1% for the year, compared with 2.8% for last year. In September, the last month for which data were available, the rate of CPI growth rose 4.9%. Annual growth in the CPI had hovered between 2.4% and 2.8% annually for the previous four years (2001-2004). The combined CPI growth rate for 2004 and 2005 was 6.9%. First quarter utility costs for revenue fund facilities (excluding Cub Run and Laurel Hill) were up 13% from last year. Much of this impact was in natural gas expenditures, which increased 99%.

- General market conditions for the Park Revenue Fund's main sources of use are mixed, but cautiously optimistic. Overall RECenter demand remains strong – up nearly 6% from FY 2004 – FY 2005. While the addition of a new facility at Cub Run contributed to the growth in demand, attendance also increased significantly at the established RECenters. National indicators for fitness activity, a key source of RECenter demand, also remain positive.

Outdoor activity remains largely dependent on weather conditions. Water Mine revenues were up 13% during the 2005 season, due to unusually hot and dry weather during the summer months. The golf industry outlook shows a leveling off of rounds played at the national level, and locally, about 8% less rounds were played at Park Authority courses in 2005 compared to the previous year because of poor weather in the first and third quarters (spring and fall). Golf business is strongest in the mid to upper end of the market. Play remains strong at Twin Lakes where prime time weekend and holiday tee times at both courses are booked well in advance of play, and initial response to Laurel Hill has been enthusiastic.

- Fee increases in most major admission areas were delayed last year to reduce the impact of the first phase of the senior discount adjustment approved in the FY 2005 fee process. If implemented, subsequent phases of the adopted senior discount program would go into effect in FY 2007 and FY 2009, and it is assumed that across-the-board fee adjustments in primary admissions areas would not be proposed in those two years for the same reason. That leaves the current year and FY 2008 as the windows for addressing general fee adjustments in major RECenter and golf admissions categories.

Business Activity License Fee

Current Situation

- The current wording of the Business Activity License Fee in the fee schedule has led to some confusion amongst the public as to whom the fee applies and in some cases, how it is applied.

Proposed Fee Adjustments

The following wording change is proposed where the Business Activity License fee appears in the fee schedule to clarify its applicability and the conditions under which it will be adjusted.

1. Current Wording in Fee Schedule:
 - Greater of \$50 or 15% of Gross Sales
2. Proposed Wording for Fee Schedule:

No person shall sell or make an offer to sell goods or services or conduct business activities within a park without the express written permission of the Park Authority. If approved, such permission is granted through issuance of a Business Activity License, the fee for which is the greater of \$50 or 15% of Gross Revenue. Gross revenue includes sales of any food and beverages, products or services, registration fees, participation fees, donations, and ticket sales generated by an activity, clinic, workshop, program or any other event, including fundraising activities to support charitable services. The Gross Revenue may be adjusted by first deducting any Park Authority facility rental fees paid in conjunction with the activity/event.

Picnic Shelters/Areas and Amphitheater Rental

Current Situation

- Use and demand is evaluated at the conclusion of each picnic season to identify potential future additions or deletions to the inventory of reservable picnic areas. In FY 2005, demand for reservable picnic areas and shelters continued to grow with many more requests than could be accommodated. There were 1,288 rentals in FY 2005. Smaller areas in parks with limited amenities were relatively underutilized. Demand was greatest for large reservable areas (capacity 100 or more) with a broader array of amenities.
- Analysis of usage and demand at the most desired facilities indicated that higher fees would not negatively impact usage. The recommended fee increases would add revenue, yet still be competitive with other picnic rental areas.
- The amphitheater rental fee structure currently has different rates for county and non-county residents. This structure is different than the prime, non-prime pricing approach used for picnic shelters/areas. It is not unusual for amphitheater renters to also request rental of a shelter or picnic area, and the difference in fee structure between the two facility types has caused customer confusion. Staff recommends eliminating this confusion by altering the amphitheater fee structure to reflect the prime and non-prime fee distinction used for picnic shelters/areas.
- Staff recommends adding two new areas to the existing inventory: picnic areas at Frying Pan Park and Martin Luther King Park.
- A discount for "long term" rental picnic groups is proposed as an addition to the fee schedule. Several renters have been booking the same location for multiple weeks throughout the season.

Proposed Picnic Shelters/Areas and Amphitheater Rental Fee Adjustments

Based on the conditions described above, proposed picnic shelters/areas and amphitheater rental fee adjustments for FY 2006 are as follows.

1. Picnic shelters/areas. Proposed adjustments to existing picnic shelter/area fees and the addition of two new picnic areas are based on the demand/supply analysis conducted at the end of the 2005 season.

	CURRENT FEE		PROPOSED FEE	
	Prime	Non-Prime	Prime	Non-Prime
Burke Lake Shelters A, B, & C	\$300	\$176	\$325	\$220
Lake Accotink McLaren Sargent Shelter	\$325	\$200	\$325	\$220
Lake Accotink Large Lakeside Shelter	\$325	\$200	\$325	\$220
Lake Accotink Small Shelter	\$85	\$66	\$100	\$78
Lake Accotink Picnic Areas 1&2	\$85	\$66	\$85	\$70

	CURRENT FEE		PROPOSED FEE	
	<u>Prime</u>	<u>Non-Prime</u>	<u>Prime</u>	<u>Non-Prime</u>
Lee District Shelter	\$85	\$66	\$85	\$70
Nottoway Picnic Area	\$100	\$78	\$125	\$100
Roundtree Park Picnic Area	\$85	\$66	\$85	\$70
Frying Pan Park Picnic Area	New Fee		\$70	\$55
Martin Luther King Park Picnic Area	New Fee		\$70	\$55

2. Amphitheater rental. The following adjustments to the amphitheater rental fee structure are proposed to achieve consistency with the picnic shelters/areas fee structure. Note that the cost of a four-hour rental during non-prime time under the proposed fee is equivalent to the current county rate. Since most county resident rentals occur in non-prime times, the proposed fee will not represent a price increase for most county resident renters.

	CURRENT FEE		PROPOSED FEE	
	<u>County</u>	<u>Non-County</u>	<u>Prime</u>	<u>Non-Prime</u>
Burke Lake, Ellanor C. Lawrence, Lake Fairfax:				
Four hour rental	\$40	\$80	----	----
Additional hour	\$10	\$20	----	----
Hourly rate (four hour minimum required)	----	----	\$15	\$10
Lee District, Mason District:				
Four hour rental	\$80	\$160	----	----
Additional hour	\$10	\$ 20	----	----
Hourly rate (four hour minimum required)	----	-----	\$ 25	\$20

3. Multiple use discount for picnic shelters/areas and amphitheater rental. A discount of 10% of the picnic rental fee will be applied to “long term” picnic rental groups who submit a request for and rent a picnic area, shelter, amphitheater or gazebo for a minimum of five (5) days in the calendar year. A “multiple use” rental will be defined as any individual or group that submits a picnic rental application requesting a minimum of five (5) rental dates. Groups who do not request a minimum of five rental dates on the same request will not be granted long term status, and thus will not be eligible for receiving the 10% discount.

Synthetic Turf Athletic Field Rental – Ellanor C. Lawrence Park

Current Situation

- In 2004, the first Park Authority synthetic turf athletic field was constructed at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park. The rental fee structure shown below was adopted during the FY 2005 fee process and went into effect November 21, 2005.

	<u>Prime Time</u>	<u>Non-Prime Time</u>
<u>Without Lights</u>		
1 hour rental	\$ 60	\$ 50
90 minute rental	\$ 80	\$ 70
<u>With Lights</u>		
1 hour rental	\$ 100	\$ 75
90 minute rental	\$ 140	\$ 120

- It was anticipated that 60 and 90 minute rental requests would be most common when the rental fee structure was established. In practice, multi-hour requests have been more common than anticipated. There has been some confusion between customers and staff regarding the appropriate fee for those desiring rentals that are longer than 90 minutes.
- Increased utility costs have prompted the need to shift to a uniform rate for the use of lights at all times.

Proposed Fee Adjustments

- Proposed changes to the synthetic turf athletic field rental fee structure include: elimination of the 90 minute rental and non-prime time fee categories and adjustment of the one hour rental rates as shown below.

	<u>Current Fee</u>		<u>Proposed Fee</u>
	<u>Prime</u>	<u>Non Prime</u>	
One hour rental with lights	\$100	\$ 75	\$ 115
One hour rental without lights	\$ 60	\$ 50	\$ 90
90 minute rental with lights	\$140	\$120	Eliminate
90 minute rental without lights	\$ 80	\$ 70	Eliminate

RECenters

Current Situation

- RECenters are heavily used and remain in high demand. Attendance at established facilities (excluding Cub Run) grew 4.9% between FY 2005 and 2004, pass sales increased 3.2% and total revenue and pass revenue both increased by more than 6%.
- RECenter general admission and pass fees were last adjusted in 2004. Little opportunity likely exists to adjust RECenter admission fees next year given the plan to phase in long-term fee adjustments approved in FY 2005.
- The Washington-Baltimore consumer price index has increased 6.9% since the last RECenter admission adjustments were implemented in 2004. Recognizing that improved profitability comes from multiple sources, including program growth and cost control, the proposed RECenter admission fee adjustment is targeted at 5%.
- Increased inflation has been reflected most readily in RECenter utility costs. Compared to last year, first quarter utility expenses (for all facilities except Cub Run) increased 14% with natural gas expenditures up 104%.
- A comparative analysis of admission fees with those of other local public providers showed that RECenter list prices are at the top of the market. While this would imply little opportunity to raise rates, it must be recognized that the RECenters rely on price discounting to a greater degree than other operators, which lowers the effective rate users pay. 70% of FY 2005 leisure fitness pass revenue was derived during sale periods where discounts ranged up to 17%. To illustrate the savings, a 12-month in-county adult pass during last year's Healthy Heart sale sold for \$455.25, compared with a regular list price of \$548.50.
- Several notable service improvements were implemented in 2005 that noticeably improve RECenter value to the customer. These include the opening of Cub Run RECenter and full implementation of the Exercise Your Options (XYO) program. Cub Run offers expanded fitness facilities and the Park Authority's first indoor leisure pool. XYO, the benefit that allows passholders to also participate in selected fitness classes, is now offered to all RECenters except George Washington. Facility improvements have also been completed this fall at South Run RECenter and are scheduled for spring completion at George Washington RECenter.
- Improved facilities at South Run field house have resulted in dramatic growth in use of the facility. The number of primary renters grew from three to nine and the number of rental hours from 646 to 1,300 between FY 2004 and FY 2005. Growth in organized field sports and year-round sports training in the region will fuel continued demand for indoor sports fields.

Proposed RECenter Fee Adjustments

Based on the conditions described above, proposed RECenter fee adjustments for FY 2006 are as follows.

1. General admission and pass fees. An across-the-board 5% increase is proposed for all general admission and pass fee categories. As recommended in the previous two approved admission fee increases, smaller more regular fee increases, such as the one proposed, should be implemented to achieve cost recovery targets.

	CURRENT FEE		PROPOSED FEE	
	<u>Base</u>	<u>Discount</u>	<u>Base</u>	<u>Discount</u>
<u>Daily</u>				
Adult	\$ 8.25	\$ 6.20	\$8.70	\$6.50
Youth/Student	\$ 8.25	\$ 4.55	\$8.70	\$4.75
Senior (Mon-Fri)	\$ 8.25	\$ 4.55	\$8.70	\$4.75
Senior (Sat/Sun/Hol)	\$ 8.25	\$ 6.20	\$8.70	\$6.50
Family	\$ 23.70	\$ 13.40	\$25.00	\$14.00
<u>Discount Fast Pass</u>				
Adult	\$ 188.50	\$ 131.75	\$198.00	\$138.50
Youth/Student	\$ 188.50	\$ 103.65	\$198.00	\$109.00
Senior	\$ 188.50	\$ 103.65	\$198.00	\$109.00
<u>Monthly</u>				
Single Adult	\$ 87.55	\$ 61.30	\$92.00	\$64.50
2 Person Adult	\$ 137.00	\$ 95.80	\$144.00	\$101.00
Dependent	\$ 21.65	\$ 15.15	\$23.00	\$16.00
Youth	\$ 87.55	\$ 48.15	\$92.00	\$51.00
Senior	\$ 87.55	\$ 48.15	\$92.00	\$51.00
2 Person Senior	\$ 137.00	\$ 75.35	\$144.00	\$79.00
Family	\$ 162.75	\$ 113.55	\$171.00	\$119.00
<u>6 Months</u>				
Single Adult	\$ 435.70	\$ 304.75	\$458.00	\$320.00
2 Person Adult	\$ 684.95	\$ 478.85	\$719.00	\$503.00
Dependent	\$ 108.15	\$ 75.70	\$114.00	\$79.50
Youth	\$ 435.70	\$ 239.65	\$458.00	\$252.00
Senior	\$ 435.70	\$ 239.65	\$458.00	\$252.00
2 Person Senior	\$ 684.95	\$ 376.70	\$719.00	\$395.00
Family	\$ 811.64	\$ 567.80	\$852.00	\$596.00
<u>12 Months</u>				
Single Adult	\$ 783.85	\$ 548.50	\$823.00	\$576.00
2 Person Adult	\$ 1,231.90	\$ 861.90	\$1,294.00	\$905.00
Dependent	\$ 194.70	\$ 136.30	\$205.00	\$143.00
Youth	\$ 783.85	\$ 431.10	\$823.00	\$453.00
Senior	\$ 783.85	\$ 431.10	\$823.00	\$453.00
2 Person Senior	\$ 1,231.90	\$ 677.55	\$1,294.00	\$712.00
Family	\$ 1,460.55	\$ 1,022.00	\$1,534.00	\$1,073.00

2. RECenter room rental fees. Revenue recovery on room rentals is a challenge. Citizen demand for room rentals is strong, but revenue recovery on private room rentals is minimal when compared with competing uses for classes and programs. A small increase in room rental fees will offset some of the disparity in cost recovery between these uses and thereby help to preserve RECenter ability to deliver this high-demand public service. These rates were last adjusted in 2000. A \$10.00 per hour increase is proposed for rooms up to 2,000 square feet in size. A \$15.00 per hour increase is proposed for rooms over 2,000 square feet.

RECenter Room Rental (Per Hour)

	CURRENT FEES	PROPOSED FEES
<u>Room Size</u>		
300-600 sq ft	\$30	\$40
601-1000 sq ft	\$35	\$45
1001-1500 sq ft	\$45	\$55
1501-2000 sq ft	\$60	\$70
2001+ sq ft	\$75	\$90

3. Mt. Vernon Ice Rink Rental. Staff recommends a 10% increase in the hourly ice rental rate last adjusted in 2004. Comparative analysis of rinks in northern Virginia and suburban Maryland shows that Mt. Vernon's hourly ice rental fee is currently 18% lower than average. The proposed change still leaves Mt. Vernon's rate significantly below the market average. Further adjustment in the ice rink rental rates will be considered during next year's fee review process, providing some time for rental groups to adjust to this year's proposed increase.

Mt. Vernon – Ice Rink Rental Per Hour

	CURRENT FEES	PROPOSED FEES
Base Rate	\$ 220	\$ 242
Discount Rate*	\$ 200	\$ 220

*Available with proof of County residency.

4. South Run Field House Rental. Staff recommends an adjustment to the full field house rental rates based on improved facility quality and increased demand, elimination of the non-profit discount to be more consistent with the rest of the fee schedule and elimination of the non-prime fee category due to lack of demand during those times.

South Run RECenter – Field House Rental, Per Hour

	CURRENT FEES	PROPOSED FEES
Full Field House, Base Rate*	\$ 80	\$ 120
Full Field House, Non-Profit Groups*	\$ 64	Eliminate
½ Field House	\$ 52	\$ 78
Non-Prime, Full Field House:		
Base Rate	\$ 60	Eliminate
Non-Profit Groups	\$ 48	Eliminate
Non-Prime, Half Field House:		
Base Rate	\$ 40	Eliminate
Non-Profit Groups	\$ 32	Eliminate

*Fees currently designated as prime time.

5. RECenter Racquetball Court Rental Fee – 10 Hour Pass. Staff recommends the following adjustment to racquetball court rental fees.

RECenter Court Rental Fees

	CURRENT FEES	PROPOSED FEES
10 Hour Pass	\$ 20	\$ 25

Golf

Current Situation

- The current industry outlook shows a leveling off of rounds played at the national level. Rounds play has been erratic, fluctuating up and down based on weather conditions. In the mid-Atlantic region rounds played are currently down 1% for the calendar year over 2004. Over the last few months, however, the outlook has been more optimistic. Total rounds played in the mid-Atlantic were up 9% in July, 6% in August and September rounds are forecast to report higher than September 2004.
- Park Authority play mirrors the Mid-Atlantic picture with variable weather conditions greatly influencing total rounds played. Poor weather in the 1st and 3rd quarters of FY 2005 led to an 8% decrease in rounds played for the year. In addition to the influence of weather, there exist other pressures in the local market including additional courses coming on line and increased discounting strategies. It is too early to determine what effect the opening of Laurel Hill Golf Club will have on play on our existing courses.
- Data from course surveys in the local market indicates that daily fee operators are anticipating raising fees slightly after many resisted increases over the past year. Some courses indicated that they will hold fees at the current rate. Some courses that aggressively discounted their fees during non-prime times are looking to scale this practice back after not realizing additional rounds or increased revenues.
- Limited membership options are going through a bit of a transition; as some daily fee providers are contemplating scaling back some of the benefits, such as the inclusion of carts.
- In response to general market conditions, only selected adjustments to greens fees are recommended in this year's fee proposal. Increases in prime time fees are necessary to cover rising costs and are seen as viable during these busier time periods. Increases to selected non prime time fees are also being recommended. These fee adjustments, along with improved weather, and continued efforts to build non-prime play through promotions and discounting should help golf to achieve its current revenue goals.
- During the first quarter of FY 2006, continued economic uncertainties and a flat market have had an impact on golf demand and associated revenues. The delayed opening of the Laurel Hill Golf Club will also have a negative impact on our revenue projections.
- The Financial Management Plan forecasts a cost recovery amount of 125% in FY 2006 for the golf section. This performance would provide the necessary funding to finance some of the needed improvements within the agency. It is anticipated that, given favorable weather and attendance at the golf courses, these fee adjustments will help to achieve the cost recovery goal.

- Demand is highest at Twin Lakes where Prime Time Weekend and Holiday tee times for both golf courses are booked well in advance of play. In addition, the initial demand and golfer response at Laurel Hill Golf club has been very positive. An important component of the Financial Management Plan growth strategy was the addition of the Laurel Hill Golf Club in calendar 2005. A 2002 market analysis conducted by Economic Research Associates (ERA) indicated an underserved market niche between the existing low-end and moderate public golf offerings and the high-end daily fee courses. To capitalize on the existing opportunity, Laurel Hill was planned to provide a higher level of clubhouse amenities, as well as an upgraded and consistent on-course experience than is available at other Park Authority courses. This year's fee proposal maintains the recommended price point, consistent with the ERA recommendation, at the bottom of the market's high-end daily fee facilities and above the price point occupied by Twin Lakes to account for the step-up in quality that will be afforded at Laurel Hill.
- Memberships are a critical part of high end golf course operations, and provide an effective, customer friendly means to build revenue and loyalty. Initial response to the Laurel Hill membership drive has been extremely positive. It is anticipated that our goal for of 60 members will be attained within the first 2 months. Recognizing this initial success it is important to allow for a pricing strategy that is consistent with the industry while still allowing for the required public and Board review. Staff is recommending authorization for a membership increase of up to 25% (\$950). This is necessary since Laurel Hill Golf Club memberships are annual memberships and the current membership fees will be in place until the end of 2006.

Proposed Golf Fee Adjustments

Based on the conditions described above, proposed golf fee adjustments for F Y 2006 are as follows.

1. Prime Time Greens Fees. Staff is recommending an increase at all courses that will continue to maintain their market positioning.

	Prime Time Greens Fees			
	9 Holes		18-Holes	
	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
Burke Lake	\$16	Unchanged	\$22	\$23
Jefferson	\$18	\$19	\$30	Unchanged
Oak Marr	\$16	\$17	\$22	\$23
Pinecrest	\$18	\$19	\$30	Unchanged
Greendale	\$21	Unchanged	\$32	\$33
Twin Lakes – Oaks & Lakes	\$27	Unchanged	\$41	\$45

2. Non-Prime Time Greens Fees. Staff is recommending the following selected changes to non-prime time greens fees.

Non-Prime Time Greens Fees				
	9 Holes		18-Holes	
	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
Burke Lake	\$13	\$14	\$19	\$20
Jefferson	\$15	\$16	\$25	Unchanged
Oak Marr	\$13	\$14	\$19	\$20
Pinecrest	\$15	\$16	\$25	Unchanged
Greendale	\$17	Unchanged	\$26	\$27
Twin Lakes – Oaks and Lakes	\$21	Unchanged	\$32	\$35

3. Laurel Hill Golf Club. The following fine tuning of the Laurel Hill Golf Club fee schedule is recommended based on experience gained from initial operation. Adjustment in prime season twilight times will maintain a consistent policy with similar operations. Creation of an after 4 p.m. 9 hole rate during prime season will establish a family friendly policy, address demand being expressed at the site and provide a means for stimulating play later in the day. Eliminating the \$10 greens fee discount for walkers will protect pace-of-play standards, a critical competitive factor in Laurel Hill's segment of the golf market. Impact on golfers will be minimal – between 5 -10% are currently walking. However, even a minimal number of walkers can significantly slow pace-of-play, given the course layout and challenging terrain. Walking will still be allowed, although there will be no financial incentive for doing so, which will encourage riding and maintain Laurel Hill's stated commitment to favorable pace-of-play.

Laurel Hill Golf Club		
	CURRENT	PROPOSED
Twilight hours changes:		
Prime Season (Weekdays, Weekends/Holidays)	1:00 p.m.	2:00 p.m.
	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
18 Hole Greens Fee Walking Discount	\$10	Eliminate
9 Hole Greens Fee, Prime Season, after 4:00 p.m.		
Weekdays	-----	\$ 34
Weekends/Holidays	-----	\$ 44

4. Laurel Hill Golf Club Membership Fees. Golf memberships are sold annually for a calendar year. Membership rates are typically set in the late fall for implementation in January, which makes this fee category out-of-cycle with the Park Authority's fee regular fee approval process. Staff is recommending authorization for a calendar 2007 membership increase of up to 25% (\$950) with staff notifying the Board of the actual fee increase to be implemented in October 2006. Membership fees currently in effect will be in place until the end of 2006. Any rate increase would go into effect in January 2007.

5. Power Carts. Staff is recommending a small increase to the 18-hole and 2nd-9 rate at Greendale and Twin Lakes. This increase will help to offset the rising fuel and electricity costs associated with these large cart fleets.

	Power Cart Rentals	
	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
<u>Greendale:</u>		
2 nd 9 Holes	\$8	\$9
18 Holes	\$24	\$25
<u>Twin Lakes:</u>		
2 nd 9 Holes	\$9	\$10
18 Holes	\$27	\$28

6. Driving Range buckets. Staff is recommending increases to large, jumbo and super buckets, but not small bucket purchases. This strategy will allow us to remain competitive, while improving our ability to cover rising costs.

	Driving Range Fees	
	Burke Lake Golf Center & Oak Marr Golf Complex	
	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
Small Bucket	\$ 6	Unchanged
Large Bucket	\$ 9	\$ 10
Jumbo Bucket	\$12	\$13
Super Bucket	\$15	\$16
	Twin Lakes & Laurel Hill	
	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
Small Bucket	\$ 6	Unchanged
Large Bucket	\$ 9	\$ 10

7. Pull Cart rentals. The following fee increase is proposed for pull carts at all facilities:

	Pull Cart Rentals	
	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
	\$ 4.00	\$ 4.50

Lakefront Parks

Current Situation

- Lake Fairfax Park and Campground continues to be a popular destination for family camping and people visiting the area. The campground operations at both Lake Fairfax and Burke Lake Park performed extremely well over FY 2005 and into the first quarter of 2006. Camping revenues at Burke Lake increased 34% in FY 2005 and camping revenues at Lake Fairfax Park increased 21%. These local campgrounds continued to experience strong visitation greatly benefiting from their close proximity to the nation's capital.
- The current situation in the Park Revenue Fund necessitates that the lakefront park sites strengthen their cost recovery effort. This year's fee recommendations will continue to address those areas that have the potential to improve the profitability of these sites.
- A market survey of area campgrounds identified only a few areas where camping fees have the potential for increases. Significant increases were approved two years ago and as a result camping revenues increased in FY 2005 by 24%. Park Authority campground facilities continue to have a very good reputation, and given their close proximity to the nation's capital, the proposed fee increase is warranted.
- Lake Fairfax Park's marina is currently undergoing an extensive renovation that will vastly increase customer's enjoyment and visitation to this area. To a lesser degree, dredging activities at Lake Accotink Park will begin to restore the vitality of the marina operation at that park. Recommended fee increases in marina operations will be warranted as our customers begin to see these improvements.
- Demand remains steady at the Water Mine with revenues growing more than 3% annually over the last several years. Water Mine admission fees were static for the first six years of operation. Subsequent fee adjustments were approved in 2002 and 2004 to align this operation with the agency's policy of small, more regular fee increases where market conditions permit. A scheduled fee adjustment in 2006 would fit the cycle established in 2002. Analysis of comparables indicates that a minor adjustment in the primary daily fee admission categories is supportable.

Proposed Lakefront Fee Adjustments

Based on the conditions described above, proposed lakefront fee adjustments for FY 2006 are as follows:

1. Campsite rental – Burke Lake. Staff recommends increasing campsite rental fees at Burke Lake as shown below.

Campsite Rental – Burke Lake		
	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
Per night, per site	\$ 20.00	\$ 25.00

2. Camping-Wilderness. Staff recommends increasing wilderness camping fees at both Burke Lake and Lake Fairfax as shown below.

Wilderness Camping – Burke Lake, Lake Fairfax		
	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
Per person, per night	\$ 2.00	\$ 3.00

3. Entrance Fees – Burke Lake. Staff recommends increasing the passenger vehicle/motorcycle entrance fee at Burke Lake Park as shown below and merging this fee with the van fee to simplify the fee schedule. This fee applies only to non-Fairfax County residents and only during weekends and holidays, mid April-mid September.

Entrance Fee – Burke Lake		
	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
Passenger vehicles, motorcycles & vans*	\$ 6.00	\$ 8.00

*Note: the current van fee is already \$8.00 and would remain unchanged.

4. Excursion Boat Rides. Staff recommends increases in excursion boat fees at Lake Accotink Park and Lake Fairfax Park as shown below.

Excursion Boat Rides – Lake Fairfax, Lake Accotink		
	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
Per Person	\$ 1.00	----
Child*	----	\$ 1.50
Adult	----	\$ 2.00

*12 years of age or younger.

5. Pedal Boat Rentals. Staff recommends pedal boat rental fees at Lake Accotink Park and Lake Fairfax Park as shown below.

Pedal Boat Rentals – Lake Fairfax, Lake Accotink		
	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
Half hour rental	\$ 5.00	\$ 6.00
Hourly rental	\$ 8.00	\$10.00

6. Rowboat Rentals. Staff recommends rowboat rental fee increases at Lake Accotink and Burke Lake Park as shown below.

Row Boat Rentals – Burke Lake		
	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
Half day rental	\$ 7.50	\$ 9.50*
Full day rental	\$13.00	\$15.00*

*Fee includes personal floatation device.

Row Boat Rentals – Lake Accotink		
	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
Hourly rental	\$ 5.00	\$ 6.00
Half day rental	\$ 7.00	\$ 9.50
Full day rental	\$12.00	\$15.00

7. Miniature Golf. Staff recommends an increase in miniature golf fees at Lake Accotink Park as shown below.

Miniature Golf – Lake Accotink		
	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
Adults	\$ 3.50	\$ 4.00
Juniors/Seniors	\$ 2.50	\$ 3.00
Second 9-holes	\$ 1.50	\$ 2.00

8. Water Mine – Daily Admission and Group Rate. Staff recommends an increase in the daily admission fee categories and group rate at the Water Mine as shown below.

Water Mine – Daily Admission and Group Rate		
	CURRENT FEE	PROPOSED FEE
<u>Daily Admission</u>		
Over 48" Tall	\$ 12	\$ 13
Under 48" Tall	\$ 10	\$ 11
Chaperone Fee	\$ 6	\$ 7
After 5 p.m.	\$ 7	\$ 8
Group Rate-Per Individual	\$ 8	\$ 9

Ellmore Farm Center

Current Situation

- In February 2001, the Fairfax County Park Authority purchased the old Ellmore Farm, a five acre parcel of land contiguous to Frying Pan Park, to preserve the land's historic structures, landscape and view sheds and to fulfill unmet site needs. With input from a citizen task force and staff, a Master Plan Revision for Frying Pan Park incorporating the newly acquired acreage was developed and approved by the Park Authority Board on September 25, 2002. Since acquisition, the Ellmore Farm Center has been renovated. The new Ellmore Farm Center opened during the summer of 2005. A pilot program was implemented for public rental fees of the facility with the intention of solidifying rates through the 2006 Fee Schedule process.
- The facility will accommodate office space, house collections storage, and eventually provide a dedicated area for farm museum exhibits. The facility also offers a large and a small multi-use space that will be scheduled by staff. Support from Fund 001 has not been made available for operation of these facilities, therefore staff has proposed a Fund 170 based program plan offering fee-based programs and activities on a break-even basis. Expanded programs will include instructor led classes such as swing and ballroom dancing, knitting, drama, and nature classes that will be offered through Parktakes.
- In comparing rental spaces and fees, the rooms at Ellmore were found to more closely match rooms available at RECenters, therefore fees were drawn from the RECenter model.

Proposed Fees

The proposed pilot rental rates were developed through price and space comparisons to Park Authority and non-Park Authority facilities.

Ellmore Farm Center Auditorium:

4 hour Rental	\$280
Extra Hour	\$ 70
Security Deposit	\$100
Alcoholic Beverage Permit	\$100

Meeting Room

2 hour Rental	\$ 80
Extra Hour	\$ 40
Security Deposit	\$ 50
Alcoholic Beverage Permit	\$100

Kayak Rentals- Riverbend Park

Current Situation

- Riverbend Park has been offering kayak classes for the general public for approximately four years. The classes have become so popular that the demand for them has far exceeded what our staff can accommodate. For the last several years many visitors have been asking staff if they could rent the kayaks. Kayaking is a sport that is growing in popularity, and Riverbend Park is the only FCPA site that offers this activity to the public.
- Currently there are no FCPA kayak rental facilities. Pohick Bay Regional Park provides kayak rentals. It's location on the Potomac estuary does not meet the public's demand for white water or swift water kayaking, however. Spring River Outfitters, another local provider, lacks a shoreline location making it difficult for them to meet demand as well.
- Staff proposes operations to run May through October. Initially, potential renters will be required to call ahead in order to ensure availability. The program will include half day and full day rentals. Hourly rental rates on the Potomac are not practical so will not be offered.
- Renting kayaks will require minimal staff time. Most weekend days are expected to have anywhere from 4-8 rentals. Many kayakers sign up for programs as couples, and it is anticipated this pattern to be true of rentals as well.
- Proposed rates are slightly less expensive than the two comparable non-FCPA sites, but are similar to current canoe rental fees at Lake Accotink (\$5 per hour.) This allows the FCPA to be slightly more competitive with the non-FCPA sites, while not competing with its own organizational fees.

Proposed Kayak Rental Fees

	<u>Half Day Rental*¹</u>	<u>Full Day Rental*²</u>
Kayak Rental	\$15	\$25

*Rental fees include paddle, helmet and flotation device.

¹ Half Day Rental is up to 3 hours

² Full Day Rental is for 3-6 hours

Rowboat Rentals - Riverbend Park

Current Situation

- Rowboat Rental fees currently exist at both Burke Lake and Lake Accotink Parks. Currently there is no boat rental facility in Fairfax County on the Potomac River above Great Falls, however public demand for this service is high. Riverbend staff would like to offer this service utilizing the Enterprise Fund Initiative. It is requested that the fees proposed here be adopted so that the schedule is in place once the boats and other necessary equipment are acquired.
- Staff proposes that the fees be the same as the proposed kayak rental fees.
- The proposed fees are higher than at Burke Lake and Lake Accotink Parks due to additional wear and tear on boats used in a river from rocks and rougher terrain. These additional costs were factored in to the proposed rates.

Proposed fee – Rowboat Rental – Riverbend Park

	<u>Half Day Rental*¹</u>	<u>Full Day Rental*²</u>
Rowboat Rental	\$15	\$25

*Rental fees include oars, and life preservers

¹ Half Day Rental is up to 3 hours

² Full Day Rental is for 3+ hours

Rental of Nature Center - Riverbend Park

Current Situation

- A rental fee for the Nature Center at Riverbend was established in the FY 2004 Fee Schedule process. Unfortunately since the fee was established there has been no success in renting the Nature Center to private groups. It is felt that the current fees and advertised availability is too restrictive. Currently the fee schedule identifies a fee for 4 hour minimum rentals with the facility as being available only on Tuesday, Saturday, Sunday 8 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. It is recommended that the minimum time for a rental be reduced as well as to identify changes in the facility availability.

Proposed fee – Nature Center – Riverbend

	<u>Hourly Rental Fee</u>	<u>Security Deposit</u>
Private Group Rental	\$75	\$100

The facility will be available everyday from 8:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. No alcoholic beverages, no kitchen facility available.

Public Comments on Proposed Fee Adjustments for FY 2006

1. Comments Provided at Public Comment Meeting (February 15, 2006)

Six speakers presented comments at the fee comment meeting held February 15, 2006. A listing of the speakers and a summary of their comments is as follows:

- Ann Pimley, Centreville, VA. Ms. Pimley spoke on behalf of the Fairfax Area Disability Services Board in her office as Vice Chair. She advocated developing a system whereby fee discounts are based on income not age or disability. Her comments appear in full on page 2.
- Steve Jennings, Professional Auction Services, Leesburg, VA. Representing a company that conducts horse auctions at Frying Pan, Mr. Jennings expressed an objection to application of the business activity license fee to his auctions. He argued that charging a fee based on percentage of gross revenue was not consistent with practices at other facilities where a facility rental fee is more customary and would force him to re-locate his sale to another facility.
- Steve Samanski, Vienna, VA. Mr. Samanski spoke as a representative of the VA. Region, U.S. Pony Club which conducts the Difficult Run Horse Trial (DRHT) at Frying Pan. He stated that applying the business activity license fee to the DRHT would be prohibitively expensive for his group and did not account for the partnership in which the Pony Club maintains all outside equestrian facilities at Frying Pan. He recommended rental fees for all facilities instead, and also suggested charging a fee for the use of the cross country course as an alternative revenue strategy.
- Albert Riveras, Providence RECenter user. Mr. Riveras opposed the RECenter fee increases in general and felt general fund revenues should be used to fund RECenter operation. He also expressed some concerns about maintenance at Providence, specifically the spa.
- Dan Hurley, Fairfax Station, VA. Mr. Hurley spoke as a Boy Scouts volunteer against applying the business activity license fee to non-profit groups like the Boy Scouts. The full text of his comments appears beginning on page 3.
- Jerry O'Dell. Mr. O'Dell supported Ms. Pimley's proposal to migrate to a system of income-based fee discounts. He also expressed opposition to having an admission structure based on height at the Water Mine RECenter and to the proposed RECenter fee adjustments in general. He also suggested extending the hours of operation at all RECenters.



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

**Testimony of Ann Pimley, Vice Chair
Fairfax Area Disability Services Board
to the Park Authority
February 15, 2006**

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Fairfax County Park Authority's proposed fee changes for 2006. The Fairfax Area Disability Services Board supports a complete overhaul of the discounted fee schedule for seniors. We believe that discounts should be based on income and not on age or disability.

The FA-DSB supports and endorses a comprehensive look at readjusting fees to make them more equitable for all users. It is our opinion that any discounts should be based on limited financial resources, not solely age or disability. Many seniors and people with disabilities are living on fixed incomes, but age and disability are not synonymous with low incomes. Many people with disabilities have lower incomes than people without disabilities, including seniors. Having the discount based on financial resources would allow eligible seniors to continue to use Park Authority facilities and will extend the discount to younger adults with disabilities who can benefit from being physically active.

While the FA-DSB does not have a specific recommendation or position on the type of formula to be used to determine a needs-based system, perhaps the FCPA could study the feasibility of using current eligibility requirements for programs in the county that provide discounts to eligible residents based on income levels or other qualifying factors.

Ann Pimley
5212 High Grove Hills Lane
Centreville, VA 20120

Fairfax Area Disability Services Board
12011 Government Center Parkway, Suite 708
Fairfax, VA 22035-1104

703-324-5421, TTY 703-449-1186, FAX 703-449-8689
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dsb



Fairfax County Park Authority
Hearing re Proposed Fee Arrangements
February 15, 2006

Statement of Daniel C. Hurley, Jr.,
Volunteer with the Boy Scouts of America

Good evening. I am Dan Hurley, a volunteer with the Boy Scouts of America and nearly 30-year resident of Fairfax County. I work with youth in the Annandale, Burke, Fairfax, and Fairfax Station areas, although other Scout volunteers work with youth throughout Fairfax County. I offer these remarks unofficially and do not represent them as the official position of the Boy Scouts of America.

- We understand and support the proposed adjustment in the Fee Schedule as it applies to a for-profit organization or to a non-profit organization if the primary purpose of the activity is to raise funds.
- As the largest and oldest of the many service organizations working with our youth, the Boy Scouts supply thousands of hours of direct service to the youth in our community. Many of these activities take place in Park Authority facilities.
- Moreover, in contrast to many other youth service organizations, the Boy Scouts contribute many hours of direct service to Park Authority facilities in the form of clean-up campaigns and service projects yielding improvements available to the general public.
- In our opinion, the proposed adjustment in the fee structure fails to differentiate between organizations which use the parks purely for recreational purposes and

those organizations which directly serve the public and the goals of the Park Authority. As noted at the beginning, we do not object to applying the proposed fee adjustment to the fund-raising activities of non-profit organizations, including the Boy Scouts.

- We urge the Park Authority to make that differentiation and not penalize those organizations, such as the Boy Scouts, which supply a direct benefit to the Park Authority and to the public at large.
- We believe that it is easy to differentiate between organizations and their activities.
- Here's one example. Like most citizens in northern Virginia, we are concerned about gang activity. Scouting is participating in a joint effort with the Fairfax County Public Schools and the Fairfax County Police Department to supply positive alternatives to gangs. With the School Board's assistance, we have met with the Police Department representatives leading this effort and have submitted plans to help staff an activity for boy scout-aged youth this summer. We have also been asked to consider including younger youth within a separate week-long activity scheduled to take place this summer in one of the county's parks.
- Surely one can discern the differences between activities that have a core service rationale, such as those just described, and other activities which are purely recreational in nature. We ask, not rhetorically, whether it is fair to use the same fee assessment schedule for the foregoing activity as for a company picnic, for example.

- Accordingly, we strongly urge the Park Authority to differentiate between organizations that use the parks purely for recreational purposes and those activities of non-profit organizations which involve use of the parks for direct service to the community.
- Thank you. I would be happy to take any questions.

Daniel C. Hurley, Jr.
10525 Daysailer Dr.
Fairfax Station, VA 22039
h. 703/978-3011

-----Original Message-----

Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2006 8:43 PM

To: Parkmail

Subject: (no subject)

I am emailing about the fees for the rec centers. In part, I agree with package discounts. I have a yearly pass because it's cheaper than day passes or monthly rates. But it is my choice as to which of the above I purchase. My problem is that I don't have the CHOICE to buy a 2 person pass. I am single and penalized because of that. I have no problem with family passes as the children should pay less but I don't feel a single person should have to pay more than half of a 2 person pass. I use half the facilities of two people and should only pay half of the price of the 2 person pass. I hope you will consider changing this policy which discriminates against single people. Thanks.

Deidre Anderson

1221 Forestwood Dr.

McLean, VA

-----Original Message-----

Sent: Thursday, February 02, 2006 10:07 AM

To: Parkmail

Subject: Feedback to: All Board Members

Comment: Members of the FCPA

Recently I became aware that you are reviewing and soliciting comments on the proposed fee changes for 2006. At this time I am asking that the board consider to eliminate the fees or reduce them for use of the FCPA golf courses for employees of the FCPS School Board. I am particularly interested in employees of the transportation department working on the country school buses. As you may be aware, we are continually suffering a critical shortage of bus drivers and assistants to operate our school bus fleet of over 1400 school buses. This could very easily be a recruiting incentive for potential new employees. In the past we have included various monetary incentives, but to the best of my knowledge we have never approached

recruiting in a quality of life for the dedicated staff that transports our most valuable resource here within Fairfax County. I have not calculated the financial impact of this request to FCPA, however I am confident that it would have a tremendous morale enhancement to our employees. In addition numerous transportation employees are senior citizens who are currently working to augment their fixed incomes to be able to maintain the quality of life that is truly an outstanding feature of residing in Fairfax County. Your kind and generous consideration of this request will undoubtedly be gratefully received by numerous employees of the FCPS Transportation Department. Again, Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinion and submit this request.

Yourname: Patrick H. Lazere
Address: 3006 Doeg Indian Ct.
City: Alexandria
State: VA

-----Original Message-----

Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2006 11:17 PM
To: Parkmail
Subject: Feedback to: All Board Members

Comment: Thank you for allowing me to voice my concerns about no golf fees for public school employees. many senior citizens seek employment with Fairfax County and it would be a good incentive to give them a discount on public golf courses.

As you may be aware, the transportation department each year is always short on drivers and is always trying to get new drivers to operate our fleet of over 1400 school buses. Many of our current employees are senior citizens and would benefit from a discount not only from golf courses but other county programs,

In addition numerous transportation employees are senior citizens who are currently working to augment their fixed income to be able to maintain the quality of life that is an outstanding feature of living in Fairfax County.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opinion. Thank again.

Yourname: Charles T Mize
Address: 12104 Green Ledge Ct
City: Fairfax
State: VA

-----Original Message-----

Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2006 12:30 PM
To: Parkmail
Subject: fees

I would like to share my thoughts on this matter. I believe that any discounts should be on the basis of need rather than age or disability. Thank you, Mary N Cocker

-----Original Message-----

Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2006 10:00 PM
To: Duray, Nick
Subject: Query about Park Authority budget documents . . .

Mr. Duray, I was given your name by a lady at Providence Rec Center as being possibly able to provide some background on the proposed increase in cost for passes. I recognize that this is a lot of data, but if you have some sort of work-up

on a budget document that would generally lay out where costs are anticipated to rise, I would appreciate it if you would point this out to me. I take it that such projected increased costs are [presumably] the stated reason for the increased prices for passes. My wife was taking the tack that there would not seem to be any justification for an increase in the rates for the various kinds of admissions and passes. I am of the opinion that there probably is some basis for an increase in prices, but have no knowledge of what your cost projections are that go into the agency budget. If this material is already available somewhere on the internet, if you could simply send along a URL for it, I would much appreciate it. Thanks for your help. Jorn Dakin Please reply to ...

Mr. Dakin-

It's not clear from your e-mail to what extent you have reviewed material in the fee proposal itself. It is available for your review online at: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/feehearing.htm>. (You get to the fee proposal by clicking the online link in green on this page.) In particular, refer to systemwide considerations beginning on page 3 and the background to the RECenter fees on page 9.

-----Original Message-----

> Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2006 8:07 AM
> To: Parkmail
> Subject: Question about Proposed 2006 Fee Adjustment
>
>
> Dear Sir or Madam:
>
> I have read the "Proposed Fee Adjustment 2006" document and the "Year
> 2006 Fee Adjustment Q&A" document posted on the www. Neither document
> states the total amount of additional money projected to be raised
> yearly by the proposed fee adjustments. Such a projection must have
> been made. Therefore my question is, "What is the total amount of
> additional revenue projected to be generated per year from the
> increase in fees?" Please email the answer to ...
>
> Thank you.
>
> Charles W. Albo

On Feb 9, 2006, at 13:47, Duray, Nick wrote:

>Mr. Albo:
>
> Yes, you are correct, there are revenue projections. They typically

> are included in the Park Authority Board item to authorize public
> advertisement of the fee proposal with the proposal itself as an
> attachment. Projected revenue from the entire package as proposed for
> the remainder of fiscal 2006 (April - June 2006) was \$256,800, and for
> fiscal 2007 was \$984,023.
>
> Nick Duray
> Park Services Division

-----Original Message-----

Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2006 8:16 AM

To: Parkmail

Subject: Higher Fees

I saw in the Fairfax Extra of the Washington Post this morning that you are considering raising fees again. You recently spent money to have TVs installed in the Centers, and now you are in need of funds. It makes no sense that you had money to spend on something that was not really needed and now you have "escalating costs". I use the Springhill Center and there are six TVs in the exercise room. TVs have absolutely nothing to do with exercise and it is excessive spending. DO NOT RAISE FEES THIS YEAR.

Stewart Buchanan

Original Message-----

Sent: Friday, February 10, 2006 10:57 AM

To: Parkmail

Subject: Proposed 2006 Fee Increases

Dear Sir or Madam:

I strongly oppose the proposed fee increases at RECenters. The primary justifications for the proposed increases are (1) a desire to keep up with the region's rising CPI and (2) an assessment that customers will pay more. This reasoning runs counter to the public service mission that the Park Authority should be pursuing.

Homeowners in Fairfax County are already being squeezed by double-digit rises in home assessments which contribute in no small measure to the rising cost of living in this area. Those of us without children in public school sometimes wonder what we're getting for our money. Furthermore, the proposal's assertion that building another RECenter or two somehow improves RECenter value to the customer is fallacious. Most of the people I know who use the Oak Marr RECenter, as I do, use only that facility because it is the closest one to their

homes. Building another RECenter elsewhere in the county does nothing to improve the RECenter's value for us.

The Park Authority should not try to match the profit margin of Gold's Gym, but rather concentrate on providing local taxpayers an oasis of healthy recreation without making them pay through the nose for it.

Jeffrey Buczacki
9508 Scarab Street
Vienna, VA

-----Original Message-----

Sent: Monday, February 13, 2006 9:42 AM

To: Parkmail

Cc: mpetitto@hotmail.com

Subject: Proposed Fee Changes

To whom it may concern:

I would like to make a suggestion regarding the issuance of passes to Fairfax County RECenters. Currently, the 2-person pass is only available to people occupying the same home address. I would like to suggest that this pass be made available to interested parties of 2, regardless of home address. Proof of Fairfax County Residency (for both persons) would still be required to receive the Discount Rate. I think that opening up this option as described above will encourage workout buddies, and increase overall pass purchases. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Moncel Petitto

-----Original Message-----

Sent: Monday, February 27, 2006 12:37 PM

To: Parkmail

Subject: Fee increases - comment

Dear FCPA,

I am writing to propose that the REC Centers no longer be self-supporting. REC Centers should be a benefit to residents, on par with libraries. Not that REC centers should be free, as libraries are, but they should be subsidized, so that all residents, including those with modest income, can benefit from them.

I have a separate comment on fee structure. The senior citizen discount should be presented as optional, to encourage senior citizens who are well off, to pay the full fee, or at least some amount in addition to the current senior citizen fee.

Sincerely,

Marie Reinsdorf
6709 Kerns Road, Falls Church, VA

-----Original Message-----

Sent: Tuesday, February 28, 2006 11:59 PM

To: Parkmail

Subject: Comments-Proposed Fee Increase

Thank you for providing this opportunity to offer our comments in connection with the proposed fee increase. For the past six months, we have had the pleasure of renting the newly-renovated South Run Field House.

In just a short time, we have attracted over eighty adult teams, serving the recreational needs of over one thousand men and women. Due in no small part to the efforts of Fairfax County and its extremely dedicated employees, we have been able to provide a valuable service to the community in utilizing this exciting new space.

In return, our contribution to Park Authority revenues has steadily increased throughout this period. Our group has already paid over twenty five thousand dollars in rental fees since October. Projecting additional growth over the next six months, we estimate our annual rental fees to exceed sixty thousand dollars, based on the current fee structure.

While we thoroughly appreciate the County's need to periodically raise its rental rates, we strongly believe that the proposed increase will threaten the future growth of our still fledgling program. In fact, more than half of our teams have advised us that they will not be able to continue participating should we raise our registration fees to offset the increased expense. Since the proposed fees will immediately double our rental rates after only six months of operations, we will need to raise team registration fees by a whopping thirty-three percent.

Instead, we will lose teams to private facilities such as the Dulles Sportsplex and Fairfax Sportsplex which offer year-round adult leagues at rates consistent with what we are presently charging for our program. While launching our leagues at South Run, we conducted an in-depth analysis of team and individual fees for all area adult programs by season in order to establish our pricing in accordance with local market conditions.

Although South Run is a somewhat larger facility, these other spaces offer similar playing surfaces and much greater comfort levels. Given the lack of insulation and HVAC at South Run, it has not been uncommon to experience indoor temperatures well under twenty degrees during the past months. Nevertheless, our pricing structure has enabled us to attract a steadily growing membership. Once we lose our competitive edge, we will also lose several existing teams and our ability to attract new participants.

In light of the above, we respectfully request that any fee increase show extreme moderation in connection with the new Field House, possibly even excluding this facility altogether. With programs operating for such a short period of time at the current rental rates, any increase stands to jeopardize the future development of offerings such as our own. Perhaps the issue can be revisited during the next fiscal year as these programs have the membership to better support such a steep rise in expenses.

In the meantime, the addition of radiant wall-mounted heaters or even propane space heaters located on the sidelines would certainly assist in assuaging player concerns, adding value to counteract perceived market imbalances while reversing potentially significant attrition.

It is our sincere hope that the above comments have been useful in helping the Park Authority to better understand the dire effects that these actions would have on our group and others at South Run.

Given the newness of this unique facility, the timing of these proposed fee increases is unfortunate, and we ask that these facts be taken into consideration for the continued viability of programs such as our own.

Bill Goldman
Director
NAA